**Export of spices and cashew**

1164. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a slump in exports of spices and cashew;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to increase the exports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) During the period April-June, 2004, there is no decline in the export of spices and cashew, as compared to the corresponding period of the previous year.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Steps taken to increase export of spices from India include post-harvest improvement through training and infrastructure development, trade promotion, extending support for upgradation of technology, introduction of high tech spice processing, setting up/ upgradation of laboratories, accreditation of units in GMP/HACCP/ ISO, packaging development, printing of business brochures, business tours abroad, sending business samples abroad, support for organic farming of spices and award of Spice House Certificate, and Indian Spices Logo for popularising good manufacturing practices, good hygienic practices and branded spice products. The Government assists cashew exporters through export promotion schemes like quality upgradation by process improvement, acquisition of flexi pouch vacuum packaging system, setting/improving the facility for cashew kernel in value added form/consumer packs and implementation of ISO/HACCP certification in order to boost cashew exports.

**Indo-Thailand trade pact**

1165. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Thailand have signed a trade pact;

(b) if so, the features thereof;

(c) whether agro-industries, automotive parts and components, electronics, software would have a significant investment potential in Thailand;